



Friday, December 20, 2019

EASD Families:

As you may know, the EASD Administration has been studying the science surrounding the importance of sleep and looking into possible ways to adjust District school start times to better reflect the recommendations of medical experts on this topic. This study and our interest in considering this topic grew out of our sincere interest to provide a school experience that sets every student up for success each and every day. The mounting scientific evidence linking sleep deprivation to the growing emotional, physical, and mental health issues among adolescent students has compelled us to seriously consider later start times for our secondary schools.

If you are not aware of this ongoing conversation and study, please take a moment and access our webpage [HERE](#). This page is devoted to this topic and includes articles, presentation slides, survey results, and a list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) and answers.

We recognize that making changes to our school start and end times to better reflect these medical recommendations could cause ripple effects on either end of the school day for students, parents, school staff, and other stakeholders. Additionally, to ensure that a set of adjusted times is feasible, we are building a complete transportation plan to make sure our bus runs could be accomplished in the times being considered. This is why we are hesitant to release any draft proposals until we have had an opportunity to verify, with some level of confidence, that they will work.

At this point, we have two types of scenarios being considered to accomplish a later start time for secondary students. The times included in these general descriptions are initial estimates and may need to be adjusted once all of the transportation work is complete.

- The first scenario attempts to compact the time between the start of the secondary day (currently 7:20 AM for MS and 7:30 AM for HS) and the elementary and Intermediate School day (currently 8:25 AM for Intermediate and 8:55 AM for elementary). Through the use of this strategy, we can get our Middle School and High School start times to be around 8:00 AM with our Intermediate and elementary start times moved to the current elementary time of approximately 8:55 AM. End times in this scenario for HS and MS would be somewhere in the 3:00-3:10 PM range, while Intermediate and elementary would be around the 3:45 PM timeframe.
- The second scenario allows us to get our MS and HS start times closer to the 8:30 AM recommended start time presented in the research but causes elementary students to move their start times to somewhere around 7:45 AM. End times for this scenario would be somewhere in the 3:10-3:20 PM range for HS and MS, while Intermediate and elementary would be around the 2:30-2:45 PM timeframe.

We expect to have at least two workable plans to share on the website by mid to late January, once we have verified that we can manage the transportation needs. As always, if you have comments or items for consideration, please continue to use the survey option found [HERE](#) and also on the District website.

Thank you for your continued patience and perspectives as we carefully consider what is best for all District students, families, and the Ephrata community.

Happy Holidays!

**Brian M. Troop, Ed.D.**

Superintendent

Ephrata Area School District